

West-Ind House May 18<sup>th</sup> 1833

My dear and ever kind Uncle,

I write this from my  
 Uncle John's beautiful residence in Gloucestershire, where mamma  
 and myself are passing some time very delightfully, amidst the  
 finest scenery imaginable, quite an English Arcadia, and we  
 have a view from the Quarter-deck (the name given by Admiral  
 Colpoys, who resided here, to the wide Terrace-walk) of twenty miles in  
 extent, and so richly wooded, that it appears one vast park. I am so  
 enthusiastic in my admiration of the beauties of Nature, that I quite  
 luxuriate in my present enjoyment of them, and between sketching  
 scenery and painting flowers &c all from the life, reading, writing,  
 riding on horseback & in the carriage and strolling about the charming  
 gardens, lanes and fields round here, my time passes in one  
 round of mental and bodily enjoyment, varied by delightful  
 society; which, when rational, and profitable, I mingle in, with  
 as much real and sincere pleasure as anyone can do, tho'  
 a constant routine of idle gossiping calls in a morning, and  
 heartless, unintellectual crowds in an evening, would be to me  
 a perfect misery - and my surprise is, how many persons, capable  
 of appreciating more rational pursuits and ~~amusements~~, can  
 give up their talents and energies at so false a shrine - I should  
 call this society: - it is, as Curran justly remarked, "one fool getting on  
 the back of many, to fly from himself." - for no one loves the so-  
 ciety more familiar and frequent intercourse with a few valued friends  
 more than myself. I were lost without it, and the constant fund



of literary enjoyment they provide me, is equally indispensable  
to my happiness. Food for the body is a good thing, and I fancy  
most of us would be puzzled if put on Chambliss diet, but food  
for the mind is as requisite to some constitutions, and mine is  
one - I must always have some projects on foot, if one fails, I  
devise another more in its place, but it is society, emulation, and  
-bition (if you will) a restless and enquiring spirit, combined with  
the constant incitements to active and energetic exertion of the mind  
that creates these projects, and gives me perseverance for their com-  
-pletion: - now this digression brings me to the most important part  
of my epistle - which I must execute by putting a few questions to you  
assuring you my dear Anne at the same time, how truly grateful  
and proud I feel for your kind intentions towards me, which your  
brief letter to Mamma, forwarded here by my Uncle Henry has made  
further known to me. - In the first place (for as we all think your  
allusion to Mamma & Lapa leaving England must be intended "in badinage"  
I pass that over) can you imagine that my parents, with all their fond  
and anxious affection for me only child could suffer an eternal separation  
from her voluntarily? - to say nothing of that child's feelings on her own  
part - secondly, that any one of my habits and pursuits could bear the  
extinguishment from all the many delights afforded them by living in  
a civilized (perhaps the word) country and among friends whom, did I  
choose or could I afford it I might specially extend to a much larger circle  
for I am no longer unknown in my native Town, and I fear  
appreciated beyond my merits, that is in my literary avocations, and  
I hear my forthcoming volume is anxiously expected. The success  
of which (for I am sanguine) will lead to introductions for my plea-



• all, especially as it will have illustrations on wood (engravings) of my own  
original drawings - something new in the book-line - but to return -  
where would my literature be in U. S. L.? writing sonnets to whetters and  
porpoises - Canzonets to Kangaroos, Madrigals to "prime merinoes," and  
dirges to Black Swans, illustrated by portraits of the engaging and lovely  
natives, semi-human natives I mean - where would be my constant  
intelligence of all new productions, (many of which I review for a kind  
very kind and dear friend who edits our Birmingham Journal and  
whose "Poet's Corner" is renowned for my often contributions.) where would be  
all the literary papers, periodicals, new music, new engravings, &c. &c.  
with which I am now interested, amused, and excited to "go and do likewise"?  
In the third place - (I must now speak without regard of our kindred)  
supposing myself competent, perhaps I am, to undertake all the notice  
portion part of your establishment, for those very branches, being portion  
so rarely united in one individual, I might easily, when in this remote  
• remote of Governor's, obtain £100 per annum in England, without  
risk of a long and dangerous voyage, ~~without~~ after which, if I did not like  
my situation I must tarry several years for the bare means of convey-  
• ing my lonely broken spirit home again, my place lost in the  
upward path which I hope I am now treading, and my mind weak-  
• ened and rendered incapable of a new effort - much, much as it would  
delight me to see you all again, I scarcely need say I must for-  
• mally decline your very kind and generous offer, with the truest  
gratitude for the feelings of affection and good opinion which  
prompted it - I beg you to present my love to Mrs Meredith,  
repeating my poor acknowledgements, and best thanks for her



her kind intentions - I am sure her of the pleasure it will give me to hear from her, in which I am sure will, I am sure participate - Of course you must, in this have heard from my Uncle Henry of Mamma's severe affliction, last December she had a paralytic stroke, which, for a time deprived her the use of the right side, now she has yet entirely recovered it in the hand & arm, but is tolerably well in general health, she would write you herself but feels awkward in writing long and so generally makes me her amanuensis that she very rarely takes pen in hand. You will find this epistle a bad specimen of my correspondence as I am writing while Mamma, my Uncle & Aunt play dummy quadrille, for I hate cards, and never play if I can avoid joining in to rapid & irrational a diversion, all the terms of the game are so often repeated that I am sometimes on the eve of writing them - We are most truly rejoiced at dear Louisa's happy marriage I wrote to her the evening previous to my journey hither, tho' very unfit for the task, having suffered most severely from the prevailing epidemic Influenza which confined me to my bed about a week, and rendered me so weak that I was lifted into a carriage for an airing only the day before I came here my Uncle came for us, and waited several days for my partial recovery, which is now complete, but I suffer much from the intense heat we have now, as does Mamma - My Uncle & Aunt are both extremely kind, and make our visit quite delightful. we are going out next week for a few days to see Tintern Abbey, Chepstow Castle, and Piercefield - from which



recursion I anticipate great pleasure, as I sketch any thing  
that particularly pleases me, and have taken so pretty and  
correct a view of my Uncle's lovely residence that he intends  
having it engraved - we are practising archery, which I  
delight in, and improve fast. I wonder you do not in-  
troduce it in Ashton - I have received from George  
a very long and truly interesting letter, which has given us  
more information than all the other letters (except your own)  
yet arrived from Tasmania; I cannot express to you  
how much it gratified me, more especially from the in-  
explicable and mysterious silence respecting him, which  
is so strictly maintained by yourself and the other members  
of your family, you have given distinct hints, which at such  
a distance are, pardon my freedom, ill-avoided, as they  
lead to endless and distressing conjecture - He mentions his  
intended voyage to New Zealand, and Mr Watson in a letter from  
London to myself mentions his own <sup>own</sup> regret at the "circumstances"  
which compel him to quit his adopted country - you may  
imagine we feel a great anxiety respecting his real fate, and  
sincerely hope to receive more satisfactory and decisive in-  
telligence - I am sorry to hear of Sarah's illness, and hope  
she will not experience a return of such serious symptoms, but  
is going and visiting calculated to preserve the health of every one  
liable to nervous disorders? - I fully expect to hear of both herself  
and John following their dear Sister's example, and shall  
most heartily rejoice in their happiness - Another great po-  
litical meeting has just taken place in Birmingham, and I



understand, went off quietly - Mr. Wood is a wonderful man  
pray Heaven he be not a misguided and ambitious one -  
I respect his private character much, and am proud of  
his high opinion of my self - You would scarcely know  
Birmingham again, we have such handsome buildings  
erected, and our Town Hall now in progress, will rival if not  
exceed the famed Parthenon of Athens. I shall send you an  
engraving of it with some books I shall entrust to the Watsons  
care for Mrs. Bell and her sisters. Sarah mentioned having pro-  
-cured a Nautilus for me some time since, and I was much  
disappointed at not receiving it by the Henry. I value my  
thing of the kind extremely, the Whales Car. Arm which  
Dear Charles sent me is quite a prize - and my younger  
cousins parrots are entrusted to a clever ornithologist to be pro-  
-perly arranged and put in a case for the adornment of  
that sanctum whose walls are hung round with my own pro-  
-ductions, and esteemed engravings, many presented by  
my uncle John and other friends, and some pinched out  
of my little savings, my bookcase is also well filled, and I  
have a host of curiosity collections, that I fancy would puzzle  
the George Tobins himself to describe adequately. a Drawer  
of neatly arranged shells from V.D.L. and a Tiger-skin obtained  
from the same, form two more of my valuables - which with  
bushes, casts, china, folios, and all the other monables of my  
double profession as artist and scribbler form some small  
variety of chattels - I should look far for all these little luxuries



for such they are to me, in Van Diemen's Land? -

Mrs John Weston and family are well, they have moved to a large, pleasant, comfortable house in Thorstone Lane - My Uncle Henry has sailed from Sydney and Henry & Mrs G. M. are gone to the sea - Mr John Cope continues much as usual. I should think you have the Birmingham Journal at Hobart, it being a radical paper, edited by a most able kind and much esteemed friend of mine, Mr Lewis, who has brought me and my interests forward in Birm and is publishing my work. I often contribute poems and <sup>literary</sup> critiques to his paper. He has promised to procure me a file of your paper from the N. & S. American Coffee House - I try to read your leaders, and often wish I could introduce you to Mr L. - he is the only person I ever knew whom I could place in the same rank - I have just had a letter from him enclosing me some proofs & framed by Atwood, who came with O'Connell to Birm & the meeting. The good folks here are ultra Tories - I am a great admirer of republicanism for a new country but cannot imagine it can agree with John Bull's long established notions - I suppose your House of Assembly is certain - Will you say me a Poltroon in Bathurst, but I have so much, that I cannot help now & then talking myself - I am verging towards the end of my two sheets, for I dare not venture crossing my literary hieroglyphics lest they prove unintelligible - Prayers, Mary Ann & Hunt join me in every kind remembrance to all your circle at Hobart, Hobart & Swan Port - believe me, dear Anne in the grateful affection of your ever attached friend, Elizabeth Anne Armstrong -



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WICKHAM

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George Meredith Esq

Robert Town

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Mrs. Dineen's Land

